

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A method for obtaining service information over the Internet, the method comprising:

at least one service provider registering a service

with a server and storing the same in a database;

a user requesting a service from the server;

initially searching the database for the requested service;

updating the database;

subsequently searching the updated database for the requested service; and

notifying the user of the results of the subsequent search.

2. The method of claim 1, further comprising notifying the user of the results of the initial search.

3. The method of claim 2, wherein either of the notifying comprises sending an e-mail to the user.

4. The method of claim 2, wherein the registering further comprises registering a corresponding service status for the service, and if the requested service is found in the database from either the initial or the subsequent search, the corresponding notifying comprises informing the user of the corresponding service status of the requested service.

5. The method of claim 2, wherein if the requested service is not found in the database from either the initial or

the subsequent search, the corresponding notifying comprises informing the user that the requested service is not registered with the server.

6. The method of claim 1, further comprising storing the request for the service in the database for the subsequent search.

7. The method of claim 6, further comprising notifying the user that the service request has been stored.

8. The method of claim 7, wherein the notifying that the service request has been stored comprises sending an e-mail to the user indicating the storage of the service request.

9. The method of claim 2, wherein the registering further comprises registering a corresponding service status for the service, and if the requested service is found on the server in the initial search and the service status indicates that the service is available, the corresponding notifying of the initial search results comprises informing the user that the requested service is available.

10. The method of claim 2, wherein the registering further comprises registering a corresponding service status for the service, and if the requested service is found on the server in the initial search and the service status indicates that the service is unavailable, the corresponding notifying of the initial search results comprises informing the user that the requested service is unavailable.

11. The method of claim 10, further comprising storing the request for the service in the database.

12. The method of claim 11, further comprising notifying the user that the service request has been stored.

13. The method of claim 12, wherein the notifying that the service request has been stored comprises sending an e-mail to the user indicating the storage of the service request.

14. The method of claim 1, wherein the registering further comprises registering a corresponding service status for the service, and if the requested service is not found on the server in the initial search but found in the subsequent search and the service status indicates that the service is available, the notifying of the subsequent search results comprises informing the user that the requested service has been found in a subsequent search and is available.

15. The method of claim 1, wherein the registering further comprises registering a corresponding service status for the service, and if the requested service is not found on the server in the initial search but found in the subsequent search and the service status indicates that the service is unavailable, the notifying of the subsequent search results comprises informing the user that the requested service has been found in a subsequent search and is unavailable.

16. The method of claim 1, wherein the updating comprises permitting at least one additional service provider to register with the server.

17. The method of claim 1, wherein the registering further comprises registering a corresponding service status for the service and the updating comprises permitting the at least one registered service provider to change the corresponding service status.

18. A system for obtaining service information over the Internet, the system comprising:

a server having a memory operatively connected thereto for storing a database of services by service providers;

means for receiving a request for a service by a user; means for initially searching the database for the service request;

means for updating the database;

means for subsequently searching the updated database for the requested service; and

means for notifying the user of the results of the subsequent search.

19. The system of claim 18, further comprising means for notifying the user of the results of the initial search.

20. The system of claim 19, wherein either of the means for notifying comprises means for generating an e-mail and transmitting the same to the user.

21. The system of claim 18, further comprising a memory for storing the request if the requested service is not found in the database in the initial search.

22. The system of claim 18, wherein the means for updating comprises means for permitting at least one additional service provider to register with the server.

23. The system of claim 18, wherein the at least one service provider further registers a corresponding service status for the service and the means for updating comprises means for permitting the at least one registered service provider to change the corresponding service status.